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ABSTRACT

This book critiques existing initiatives for improving the education of African American children, maintaining that the current focus of school reform movements (teacher training and testing, child testing, child retention, and one-size-fits-all models of parent involvement) are not very useful. It argues that the model for creating educational excellence for African American students is found in classroom activity between teachers and students. The key to effectively teaching students lies in instructional leadership provided by principals. Meeting diverse students' needs involves the school becoming the coordinator of support services such as tutoring and mentoring provided by concerned citizens, service clubs, churches, and fraternal organizations. The book urges educators to give up their belief that African American children's educational limitations are the reason for achievement gaps. Eight chapters highlight: (1) "Mastery and Excellence versus the Bell Curve"; (2) "Playing by the Rules"; (3) African American Goals and Closed Doors";(4) "Down the Up Escalator"; (5) "Twenty-First-Century Education Project: Report and Recommendations"; (6) "A Model for Culturally Appropriate Pedagogy"; (7) "The Role of the African American Church in Creating a Village"; and (8) "Where Do We Go from Here? A Call to Action." (Contains 127 references.) (SM)

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